

**UNITED NATIONS
ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE**

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EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES (EUROSTAT)**

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7 May 2001

Dear ...

Subject: Joint UNECE/Eurostat Work Session on Electronic Data Reporting (13-15 February 2002, Geneva, Switzerland)

At its 2000 plenary session, the Conference of European Statisticians decided to convene a Work Session on Electronic Data Reporting (EDR). The meeting will be held in Geneva from 13-15 February 2002.

The agenda comprises the following topics:

- (i) Management, organizational and policy issues;**
- (ii) Security, confidentiality and privacy issues;**
- (iii) Metadata, conceptual models and standards;**
- (iv) Users' experience with online modes.**

The explanatory notes to the topics are attached in Annex 1 for your convenience.

The topics will be considered based on two main categories of contributions: **invited papers** and **contributed (or supporting) papers**. The ECE secretariat has contacted the following countries and institutions with a request to prepare invited papers: Slovenia, United Kingdom and United States (for topic (i)); Denmark and United States (for topic (ii)); Austria, University of Edinburgh and Eurostat (for topic (iii)); and Canada, the Netherlands and Norway (for topic (iv)). The invited papers will provide the main basis for discussion on the given item and will be presented by their authors. However, the other papers which countries contribute to the meeting (supporting papers) are also welcome and, although they will not be individually presented, issues raised in them may also be discussed under that item. As with the invited papers, any supporting papers should address a specific agenda item.

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We would appreciate it very much if you could inform the ECE secretariat before 15 June 2001 whether your country/organization intends to submit a contribution on the topics mentioned above. We would be grateful if you could let me have the participant(s) name(s) at the same time. The meeting will be held in English only.


The papers should preferably not exceed 10 pages and should be submitted together with a one-page summary to the ECE secretariat by 15 October 2001 at the latest to allow for reproduction and distribution before the meeting. Contributions should be sent to us in electronic form preferably by e-mail (address: jana.meliskova@unece.org) or on floppy disk (Word Perfect, Word or ASCII).

Documentation for the Work Session will be distributed through Internet where available.
Address: <http://www.unece.org/stats/>

Should you have any queries concerning the meeting, please contact Mrs Jana Meliskova, UN/ECE Statistical Division, tel.: +41 22 917 41 50; fax +41 22 917 00 40, e-mail: jana.meliskova@unece.org.

We look forward to hearing from you soon.

Yours sincerely,



Paolo Garonna
Director
Statistical Division
Economic Commission for Europe



Photis Nanopoulos
Director
Directorate A
Eurostat

EXPLANATORY NOTES TO TOPICS

I. Management, organisational and policy issues

This session will focus on issues of functional organisation in developing and offering this new service to respondents. It would be of particular importance to discuss how some agencies have restructured their activities to offer this additional collection option. Papers in this session can address a variety of issues:

- integration of the EDR option with the existing data collection methods and processes;
- strategies for migrating EDR research into a production environment including strategies for supporting EDR research, testing (cognitive lab, usability and mode effects) and prototyping while maintaining production and for addressing rapid changes in technology;
- possibility of outsourcing some of that work and how it impact on the organisation;
- relationship of survey collection to National government policy regarding the Internet and online provision of services;
- changes to the hours of service and additional staff necessary to cover off these new hours of service and to provide improved service delivery;
- strategies to address the problem of operational resources already stretched in delivering the on-going survey program activities.

II. Security, confidentiality and privacy issues

There is a great concern by many agencies to offer an EDR option to their respondents in a secure manner and, in many instances, it has been a barrier to the development of Web-based solutions. This session is expected to touch on a number of issues:

- requirements to inform the respondent about the use of the Internet to complete survey questionnaires and about the associated risks of disclosure;
- the respondent readiness to accept that, in an electronic world, data from many different sources could be linked;
- description of different security solutions deployed by statistical organisations including the aspect of the management of public key infrastructure or other secure solutions;
- impact for statistical agencies with strict policies related to confidentiality on the flexibility, user-friendliness and overall acceptance of the EDR tools by survey respondents;
- development of new guidelines or policies on security, confidentiality or privacy directly related to electronic collection and communications with respondents.

III. Metadata, conceptual models and standards

The traditional approach towards making statistics is based on data collection by means of surveys using paper questionnaires. The paper form is gradually being replaced by an electronic one. This new way of data collection has a fundamental impact on the way statistical agencies operate. This session is planned to consider issues such as:

- automated extraction of the required information from the respondents' IT systems e.g. accounting or ERP (Enterprise Resource Planning) systems, and the mapping of this enterprise information with statistical concepts;
- the impact of automated extraction and mapping on consistency and quality of statistics;
- the uses of emerging technologies such as XML (extensible markup language) and common languages such as the XBRL (extensible business reporting language) to allow exchange of information;
- tools, models, concepts and definitions for multiple surveys offering EDR that can lead to a smaller number of independent contacts for respondents;

IV. Users' experience with EDR options

The purpose of the session is to share experience and solutions and identifying subjects that required future research. It is expected that some papers will outlined what has worked as well as what problems and difficulties have been encountered in deploying EDR options. This session should also cover issues on usability of this option by respondent and studies conducted to evaluate the impact of EDR in conjunction with other collection methods on data quality, respondent burden and overall satisfaction. Studies on the various factors that encourage respondents to adopt EDR are also included in this session.

ANNEX 2

Guidelines for formatting contributions to the Work Session

1. Papers should not exceed 10 pages. Additional information can be disseminated at the Work Session if needed. The contributions should be submitted electronically either in Word or Word Perfect format, preferably by e-mail to the following address: *jana.meliskova@unece.org*.
2. It is recommended to keep the formatting as simple as possible. The formatting requirements valid for the UN/ECE Work Sessions' documentation are the following:
 - paper margins: left - 3 cm, right - 1.5 cm, top 1.8 cm, bottom 3.0 cm;
 - font: Times New Roman 11-12 points;
 - paragraphs numbered (to facilitate referring to the document);
 - line spacing 1, with one empty line between paragraphs;
 - text in one column, beginning from the left margin;
 - titles and subtitles in bold.
3. To limit the size of the paper in terms of memory (preferably not exceeding 1 MByte). Bigger papers cause many problems when handling, printing, disseminating and archiving.
4. In general, we cannot reproduce colour pictures on paper. They will be copied black-and-white, but the colours will be visible on Internet. Therefore, converting colour images to black-and-white is a possible solution for reducing the documents size in Bytes.
5. If the paper includes a lot of graphics, formulas, etc., please send us also a hard copy.
6. Please DO NOT include in your papers:
 - company logos (the name of the author and the institution where he/she works is sufficient);
 - page headers/footers;
 - built-in or user-defined styles;
 - coloured or shaded background;
 - too many pictures/graphics.